



Gamification transforms agent effectiveness and boosts contact centre efficiency



The pandemic jolted home working out of a relaxed groove to must-have-it-now urgency. The essentiality of workforce engagement management didn't follow far behind. Read how it positively affected another's vision while revolutionising the customer experience.

For contact centre managers, the line between encouraging and overburdening can be a fine one. Because of this, customer experience (CX) specialists such as Genesys have worked hard to introduce workforce management and gamification tools into their platforms. Agents need to feel empowered and rewarded to achieve and go above and beyond, while supervisors need to be able to dig deeper into interactions to benchmark agent performance and accurately pinpoint training needs.

Workforce management and gamification have been features of contact centre platforms for some time, but their relevance has shot up during the pandemic with remote working practices where face-to-face support, feedback and coaching are virtually impossible.

Over the last 12 months, workforce management and gamification have gone from being nice-to-have add-ons to key tools in driving agent engagement. To highlight their increasing importance, Foehn held a webinar featuring speakers from Genesys and FirstCare, a company that has had spectacular success in moving to a fully home-based contact centre setup.

This white paper details the FirstCare story and lessons learnt, including the gamification and workforce engagement management features that contact centre leaders can take advantage of today to improve agent performance and drive profitability and customer experience.



Workforce engagement management: key to success in 2021

The idea that an engaged workforce is more productive is not new. In contact centre management there's been abundant research to show how engagement techniques such as the use of gamification — awarding points for actions, creating leader boards and so on — break up the humdrum and help agents be more effective and productive.

According to research by Frost & Sullivan, for example, companies that adopt a full suite of workforce engagement management tools and processes are 60% more likely to have highly engaged and motivated employees. They are also 82% more likely to provide better customer service and 96% more likely to achieve overall profitability.

Unsurprisingly, one in three organisations have fully adopted workforce engagement management technologies and techniques, although more than half (55%) could do so today thanks to the tools that they have at their disposal on existing contact centre platforms. These tools are likely to become increasingly important in the wake of the pandemic. A poll by Gartner in December 2020 showed that many aspects of flexible working implemented as a result of coronavirus lockdowns are likely to become permanent features in future.

For example, 90% of respondents said they envisaged allowing employees to work remotely at least part of the time from now on. Meanwhile, 65% were committed to offering flexibility around when people had to work. And 26% were considering changes to productivity monitoring for remote employees.

Elsewhere, PwC has surveyed executives in the United States and found that while there is still a preference for on-site workers in helping to build a strong company culture, there is also considerable difference of opinion on exactly what level of on-site presence is required.

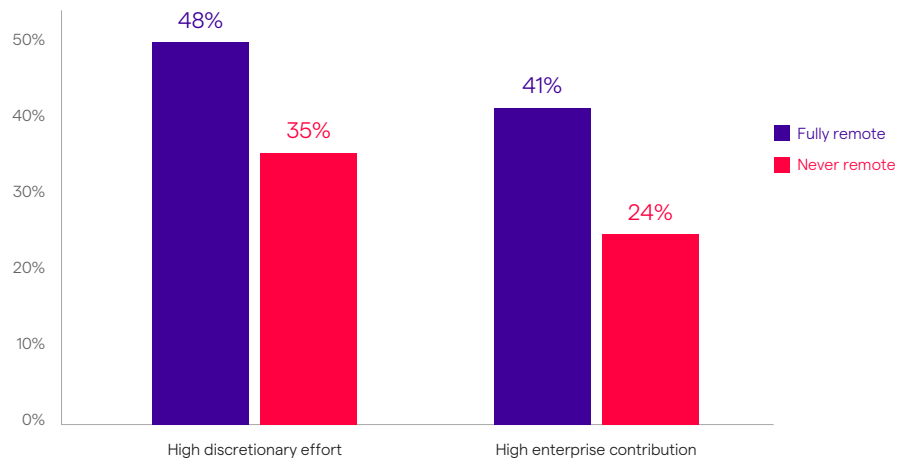
Only around a fifth (21%) of bosses felt workers needed to be in the office all five days a week, while 29% voted for keeping employees on site just three days a week. Almost a third (31%) of executives believed it would be possible to maintain a strong company culture with workers on site only two days a week or less, and 5% said employees did not need to be in the office at all.

Remote and blended working: the new constant

These changing attitudes to workforce location are likely linked to research showing that, far from slacking off, people who work from home tend to be more productive than their colleagues in the office. A 2020 Gartner workforce responsiveness study, for example, showed fully remote employees scored more highly than non-remote counterparts on discretionary effort and enterprise contribution.

Higher performance of fully remote employees

Percentage of employees reporting high scores



n = 5,002 Source: Gartner Workforce Responsiveness Survey
Note: Values represent the percentages of employees who scored greater than 78.6 on indexes ranging from 0 to 100.

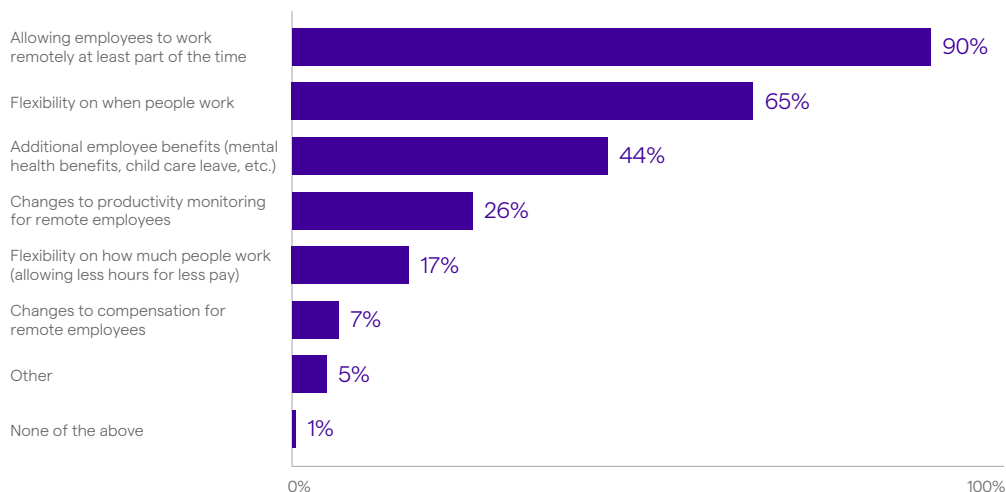
Before 2020, many business leaders may have been reticent to put such findings to the test in their organisations. But COVID-19 lockdowns have forced most to take the plunge. And according to a US remote work survey by PwC, the results have been largely satisfactory. Only 6% of employers and employees deemed the shift to working from home had been unsuccessful.

This finding is backed up by the results of a contact centre audience poll held during the Foehn webinar. All the respondents appeared willing to continue with remote working after the pandemic. And only 21% reported having had mixed results with their remote working strategy. Against this backdrop, it is clear that 2020 could be seen as an inflection point in the way contact centres are set up and managed.

Instead of being defined by location, the contact centre of 2021 looks set to be a geographically dispersed operation where the glue that holds teams together is a shared platform that rewards workers through gamification.

What trends will remain after the pandemic?

Out of the changes that you have made because of COVID, which do you expect to keep in place after vaccines are widely adopted?



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 n=116 Source: Gartner HR Lessons From COVID-19 Webinar Poll (December 9, 2020) © 2020 Gartner, Inc. All rights reserved. CTMKT_1132253

Genesys: ahead of the management game

Genesys, which was identified as a leader in contact centre technology in the 2020 Omdia Decision Matrix report, offers a range of built-in workforce management and gamification features within its cloud platform.

The Genesys nGAGEMENT solution combines game mechanics with recognition and social media concepts to influence employee behaviour. In so doing, it encourages agents to improve individual performance and be more collaborative with colleagues. An agent's home screen, for example, includes a scorecard that acts as an incentive to improve metrics across a range of outcomes. Agents and managers can drill down into this data to review averages, trends, and personal bests.

The data is highly granular: if needed, an agent or manager can even review a transcript or recording of a particular customer interaction, effectively using an action replay to spot best practices and areas for improvement. Within Genesys Cloud, workforce management tools allow coaching to be orchestrated with daily schedules at times when it will have the least impact on contact centre operations.

Similarly, nGAGEMENT can host learning modules that can be pushed out to agents when needed, for example to inform about new product features or compliance requirements. Beyond the agent's home page, a whole section of the workspace is devoted to performance measures such as punctuality and call handling time. These include targets and scores which can be rolled into leader boards across the contact centre.

Using separate leader boards for different measures helps drive agents' performance by offering a range of areas in which to excel. These measures — and what constitutes good or bad performance — can be customised and Genesys is bringing out new features all the time.

The FirstCare experience: Genesys gamification in action

The value of gamification in a contact centre setting is amply illustrated by the experience at FirstCare, a UK company that specialises in helping organisations reduce employee absenteeism. FirstCare relies on contact centre technology to connect nurses with absent employees and provide care and advice that can help workers return to work.

"Over the course of the next year, two out of three of us will take unplanned leave due to illness, injury or bereavement," said Ed Lane, head of operations at FirstCare. "This has a huge impact. Between missing shifts, retraining and hiring people to cover those who are absent, the cost of absences is around £56 billion per year in the UK alone."

In 2019, FirstCare launched a digital transformation programme that saw it move from three on premise contact centre systems to a single Genesys Cloud platform. The solution and its users were put to the test when coronavirus forced the UK into lockdown in 2020. Average daily incoming call volumes rose by 70% on the previous two months and doubled compared to the same period in 2019. While this was happening, FirstCare reorganised its entire workforce to work from home in just 10 days.

Despite these challenges, the gamification and workforce management features in Genesys helped FirstCare to improve engagement among its workers. Increased focus on workforce engagement and team enablement saw staff retention rise by 38%.

In addition, FirstCare absence and unplanned shrinkage hours improved by 44.5% compared to 2019 levels and the company has achieved an average customer satisfaction score of 91%. These results saw FirstCare scoop the 'most effective application of technology' category in the 2020 European Contact Centre and Customer Service Awards.

Gamification was seen as a major step forward. The company has also digitised its entire recruitment and onboarding process, so these activities can be carried out remotely in future.

Develop your workforce management strategy

The pandemic has demonstrated how CX and contact centre leaders can not only manage a widely distributed, home-based workforce but also inject much-needed motivation and engagement.

However, it's clear that getting more out of home-based agents requires sophisticated technology platforms with extensive workforce management and gamification features, like those that can be delivered via Genesys Cloud. Furthermore, these features are highly intuitive and customisable while at the same time yielding rich data for management reporting and training purposes. At Foehn, we are expert in helping you to get the most out of Genesys solutions. Contact us now for more information on how your organisation can benefit from the platform.



For further information

Recognised as the Genesys EMEA Cloud Provider of the Year for two years running, Foehn has a proven track record in helping customers plan for uncertainty and successfully leveraging trends as they develop. Click here for further information, or get in touch at:

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